



Vietnam Veterans Of America

Chapter One

www.vvachapter1.com
JANUARY 2006



MINUTES OF CHAPTER MEETING Jan. 11, 2006

Three members attended.

President Andy Megrath is emerging from several months of computer hell and will be getting some retraining on updating the chapter's Web site, www.vvachapter1.com. He'll then be able to put up some recent newsletters that could not be posted while his system was messed up.

Andy requests that any members changing their mailing addresses be sure to let him know, so we can stay in touch. Sometimes we get newsletters back as undeliverable with no new address provided.

Treasurer Dave Mathis reported \$16,119.38 in the chapter's bank accounts.

Membership chairman Dick Doyle reported by e-mail that membership stands at 133 regular members and three associate members. President Andy Megrath reported that Robert Pietryka of Wilbraham, Mass., formerly of West Rutland, is planning to join.

The chapter received a thank-you note from the Vietnam Women's Memorial Foundation for our \$25 donation.

Andy Megrath received a package of materials regarding the Moving Wall, a replica of The Wall in Washington, D.C., that honors Vietnam War dead. The Moving Wall visited Rutland in 1991, and the chapter is considering whether to bring it back. Tom Donahue, executive vice president and CEO of the Rutland Region Chamber of Commerce, has expressed interest in such an event. Here are a few things to consider:

The basic cost to bring the Moving Wall is \$4,000. Though there are for-profit versions of the replica, the one we are considering is a non-profit venture. It takes about a year and a half of lead time to get the wall.

Having the wall visit is a major undertaking in that issues such as security, publicity, toilet facilities, insurance, staffing of the exhibit and any ceremonies, refreshments, municipal approvals, printed materials and the like have to be taken care of.

Reports on the appearance of the Moving Wall recently have been mixed, with good turnouts in some places and skimpy response in others. For example, Walpole, Mass., had a strong turnout, but only about 5,000 people visited the wall in Meredith, N.H. Some people in Meredith felt they didn't need to see the display again after seeing it once before.

So far, President Andy Megrath has received one response from our members regarding this idea. Anyone who would like to be involved in bringing the Moving Wall to Rutland sometime in latter 2007 should get in touch with Andy at his e-mail listed below or the mailing address on the other side of this newsletter.

The chapter will submit an application for the Moving Wall to get our name in, but will defer a decision on committing to the project pending further response from our members.

Following the success of last year's encampment, Civil War and Revolutionary War re-enactors will set up camps in Rutland's Main Street Park on May 6, the day before Rutland's annual Loyalty Day Parade.

Applications for inclusion on the Rutland County Vietnam Veterans Memorial Honor Roll continue to trickle in. We have five new qualified veterans, along with three corrections to existing names (one wrong home town, one misspelling and one omission of "Jr." after a name).

Andy Megrath reported that the chapter contributed \$496 for new tires for a woman whose husband was deployed with the Vermont National Guard. The money is provided in response to requests from Heather Hinckley, family readiness volunteer for Rutland's 2nd Battalion, 172nd Armor. We approved the expenditure and voted to replenish the fund, which allows for up to \$500 in assistance to families of deployed service personnel. The president and one other officer, or any two officers can authorize the assistance.

Sam Bunge, a member from Petersburg, Alaska, generously sent us a \$100 donation.

The Boys & Girls Club of Rutland County, which we have supported in the past, sent us a request for continuing financial support. The matter will be taken up when we have a larger turnout.

Jack Crowther moved that the chapter purchase 250 each of stick-on and static-cling type stickers bearing the chapter's logo. One of each is included with this newsletter. The remainder will be sold for \$2.50 apiece, which includes postage. Just contact Andy Megrath at the address on this newsletter.

With limited recent attendance and not much business on our agenda, we decided to skip the February meeting and meet next on **Wednesday, March 8**, our regular meeting time for that month.

The Chapter One members listed below have sent in their e-mail addresses to share with other members. Anyone who would like to add their name to the list can simply e-mail Dick Doyle, who is maintaining the list. Dick's e-mail is in the list below. The names in **boldface** are new additions or have new e-mail addresses.

Personal email addresses concealed

(tom@wintakerrealestate.com), and David Woodcraft in Essex, England (dwwoodcraft@msn.com).

Submitted by,

Jack Crowther, Secretary

**The next meeting will be Wednesday, March 8, at 6 p.m.
at the chapter offices at the VFW, 15 Wales St., Rutland
(skipping February meeting).**

VVA Chapter 1
15 Wales St.
Rutland, VT 05701-4026

Address Correction Requested



Vietnam Veterans Of America

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MARCH 2006



MINUTES OF CHAPTER MEETING March 8, 2006

Twelve members attended, the most in recent months. New faces included Tim Lonergan from Middletown Springs and Walter Hollmann from Center Rutland.

Minutes of the January meeting were accepted as printed in the newsletter.

Treasurer Dave Mathis reported \$15,324.49 in the chapter's bank accounts.

Membership chairman Dick Doyle reported that membership stands at 132 regular members. New life members include Mark Truhan, recently returned from active duty in Iraq, and Walden Pratt, bringing our life membership total to 66, exactly half of our regular membership. The chapter has three associate members.

President Andy Megrath reported that the chapter's application to have the Moving Wall (a traveling replica of The Wall in Washington, D.C., that memorializes Vietnam War dead) visit Rutland again. A likely time period for an appearance in Rutland would be May or June of 2007, the last visit having been in 1991. The chapter, with encouragement from Tom Donahue of the Rutland Region Chamber of Commerce, has "put its name in" for the wall but has not committed to hosting it.

The Moving Wall requires an initial payment of \$4,000, and entails a variety of efforts for security and logistical support. Corporate sponsorship could be solicited for the expenses. A visit by the wall would also require a good deal of volunteer effort from the chapter. Anyone interested in participating in such an effort should contact Andy Megrath at the return address on this newsletter or by e-mail.

A decision on the Moving Wall will likely be made at our next meeting, Wednesday, April 12.

Following some discussion, Bub Crosby moved to donate \$500 to the Boys & Girls Club of Rutland County, to be divided among two payments six months apart. Seconded by Larry Young. Passed unanimously.

Andy Megrath read a letter from Don Amorosi of Glens Falls, seeking support for the family of a soldier missing in Iraq. It's uncertain whether the soldier is alive or a prisoner. The soldier is from an Illinois Army Reserve unit. Don is active in the Northeast POW-MIA Network. The chapter tabled the issue. Andy Megrath will get some more information before we make a decision.

Frank Austin of the Nominating Committee for the Vermont State Council of VVA notified us that the offices of president, vice president, secretary and treasurer are available and will be decided on at the council's June meeting. Chapter 1 board member Fred Hellmuth is currently secretary. Any nominations need to be forwarded to Austin. Anyone interested in these positions should contact Andy.

Andy read an invitation from Heather Hinckley to attend a Freedom Salute Award presentation being made to the 2nd Battalion, 172nd Armored, of the Vermont National Guard on March 12 at Castleton State College. Heather has been the family readiness volunteer for the battalion, and Chapter 1 provided approximately \$2,000 of assistance to certain families during the battalion's deployment. At the ceremony, the Guard planned to present an award to the veterans organizations in Rutland for assistance to the unit. Chapter 1 of VVA has been chosen to receive the award. Adjutant Gen. Martha Rainville was to present the award. Several chapter members planned to attend.

The chapter will vote on a slate of officers and board members at the April 12 meeting. Jack Crowther moved that the current slate be nominated to serve another year. Seconded by Dick Doyle. Passed unanimously.

The slate includes president, Andy Megrath; vice president, Larry Young; treasurer, Dave Mathis; secretary, Jack Crowther. Board members are Dick Doyle, Bill Whitney, Bub Crosby, Fred Hellmuth and Mike Divoll.

Anyone interested in serving as an officer or board member should notify Andy Megrath or another officer or board member or come to the April meeting. Nomination of the existing slate is **not** designed to discourage anyone wishing to serve from participating in the election.

The Chapter One members listed below have sent in their e-mail addresses to share with other members. Anyone who would like to add their name to the list can simply e-mail Dick Doyle, who is maintaining the list. Dick's e-mail is in the list below. The names in **boldface** are new additions or have new e-mail addresses. After discussion of a recent discussion carried out by e-mail, it was agreed that mass mailings to this chapter list should be limited to Chapter 1 business. This caution will be relayed to those on the list by Dick.

Personal email addresses concealed

Submitted by,
Jack Crowther, Secretary

**The next meeting will be Wednesday, April 12, at 6 p.m.
at the chapter offices at the VFW, 15 Wales St., Rutland.**

VVA Chapter 1
15 Wales St.
Rutland, VT 05701-4026
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Vietnam Veterans Of America

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APRIL 2006



MINUTES OF CHAPTER MEETING

April 12, 2006

Seven members were present.

Treasurer Dave Mathis presided temporarily.

Dick Doyle moved to elect the slate of officers nominated at the March meeting. Seconded by Bill Whitney. Jack Crowther moved to close nominations. Seconded by Mike Divoll. The motion to close nominations passed unanimously. The motion to elect the slate then passed unanimously.

Elected officers were: president, Andy Megrath; vice president, Larry Young; treasurer, Dave Mathis; secretary, Jack Crowther. All were serving in those positions.

Dick Doyle moved to elect the members of the board of directors nominated at the March meeting. Seconded by Jack Crowther. Andy Megrath moved to close nominations. Seconded by Bill Whitney. The motion to close nominations passed unanimously. The motion to elect the slate of board members nominated passed unanimously.

The members of the board of directors elected were: Dick Doyle, Bill Whitney, Bub Crosby, Fred Hellmuth and Mike Divoll. All were serving as directors.

Dave Mathis moved to accept the March secretary's report. Seconded by Bill Whitney. Passed unanimously.

Treasurer Dave Mathis reported a total of \$16,679.28 in the chapter's bank accounts. Jack Crowther moved to accept the report. Seconded by Bill Whitney. Passed unanimously.

Dick Doyle reported seven membership renewals, along with the loss of six members, for a total of 128 members, plus three associate members. New members include Bob Lefter of Rutland and Stephen Paul of Springfield.

There was some discussion of e-mailing the newsletter to members willing to receive it electronically. It could save approximately \$200 a year on postage. We have close to 50 members on the list. Dick Doyle will cross-check our e-mail list with the current membership list.

The chapter received a thank-you from Michael Raymond, executive director of the Boys & Girls Club of Rutland County, for our \$500 donation, which is being made in two payments of \$250. The club has offered to have us meet at the club and see the facility. The chapter will plan a meeting there at a later date.

Chapter One received an invitation to attend a social event hosted by the 2nd Battalion, 172nd Armored of the Vermont National Guard at Castleton State College's Fine Arts Center on Tuesday, April 25, at 7 p.m. The evening features light food and a meet-and-greet session with the soldiers, recently returned from deployment in the Mideast. A video on the mission will also be shown. Anyone interested should notify Andy Megrath at 775-1745 as soon as possible, as the guard unit needs a count of those attending by April 22.

The chapter is being invited as one of the groups that assisted in supporting guard families during the deployment of the unit. The chapter provided something over \$2,000 in cash assistance. This was divided among: the Vermont Military Assistance Fund, which helps families of deployed soldiers; three families of deployed soldiers, to help pay bills; postage for the local guard Family Assistance Center, to ship packages to the troops.

The chapter has also received a handsome bronze statuette of the Concord (Mass.) Minuteman in recognition of our assistance. The statuette, about 15 inches high, was presented to President Andy Megrath on March 12 at an awards ceremony for the guard's 2nd Battalion, 172nd Armored, at Castleton State College.

Richard Reed, service officer for the Vietnam Veterans of America in Vermont will be in Rutland on April 25 for assisting veterans with Veterans Administration claims. He can be reached by any of the following means: State of Vermont Veterans Affairs, 118 State St., Drawer 20, Montpelier, VT 05620; (888) 666-9844 (toll-free in Vermont), (802) 828-3379, (802) 224-6080 (cell phone); e-mail RReed@va.state.vt.us. The Web site is www.va.state.vt.us.

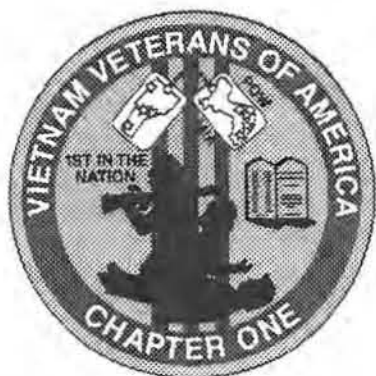
The Chapter One members listed below have sent in their e-mail addresses to share with other members. Anyone who would like to add their name to the list can simply e-mail Dick Doyle, who is maintaining the list. Dick's e-mail is in the list below. The names in **boldface** are new additions or have new e-mail addresses. Mass mailings to this chapter list should be limited to Chapter 1 business.

Personal email addresses concealed

**The next meeting will be Wednesday, May 10, at 6 p.m.
at the chapter offices at the VFW, 15 Wales St., Rutland.**

Submitted by,
Jack Crowther, Secretary

VVA Chapter 1
15 Wales St.
Rutland, VT 05701-4026
Address Correction Requested



Vietnam Veterans Of America

Chapter One

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MAY 2006



MINUTES OF CHAPTER MEETING May 10, 2006

Nine members were present.

The secretary's report was unanimously approved as printed in the April newsletter.

Dick Doyle reported by e-mail that the chapter has 130 regular members and four associate members. Wilbur Dubray is a new life member.

Richard Reed, service officer for VVA in Vermont, will be in Rutland May 23 to assist veterans with Veterans Administration claims. He can be reached by any of the following means: State of Vermont Veterans Affairs, 118 State St., Drawer 20, Montpelier, VT 05620, (888) 666-9844 (toll-free in Vermont), (802) 828-3379, (802) 224-6080 (cell phone), e-mail RReed@va.state.vt.us. The Web site is www.va.state.vt.us.

Bill Whitney made a motion that the chapter donate \$100 to Keith Maupin through Don Amorosi of Glens Falls, a friend of Chapter One and a longtime activist with the Northeast POW-MIA network. Maupin is the father of Sgt. Keith M. Maupin, a member of an Army Reserve unit in Illinois. He was captured in Iraq about two years ago, and his fate is unknown. His family is seeking to keep attention on the matter and trying to keep their son from being classified KIA-BNR (killed in action, body not recovered). Don is helping with that effort by soliciting funds. The motion was seconded by Jack Crowther and passed unanimously. Don or Joe Donaldson have been planning to attend a chapter meeting to explain the issue. The donation is an initial contribution to avoid delay. If Don wishes to seek further assistance, the chapter will entertain his request.

President Andy Megrath distributed a poster from VVA Chapter 601 in Bennington for the Second Annual Motorcycle Ride July 29 to raise funds for the Bennington Honor Roll Monument. Sign-up will begin at 8:30 a.m. at the state office parking lot, with the ride leaving at 10:30 a.m. and heading north on Historic Old Route 7A. Following the ride there will be food for everyone and a concert with raffles and other prizes at the Vermont Veterans Home. Cost of the ride is \$15 per bike and \$5 for each extra person on the bike. For a form and disclaimer that needs to be filled out, contact John Miner at (802) 447-0407 or e-mail him at vermontveteran@netscape.net.

Andy and Treasurer Dave Mathis went to Castleton State College April 25 for a social event hosted by the 2nd Battalion, 172nd Armored of the Vermont National Guard to thank supporters of the unit during its Mideast deployment. They received an attractive certificate of appreciation. Unfortunately, overall attendance at the event from helping organizations was small. Andy apologized for sending out the newsletter, which noted the date of the event, too late to notify Chapter 1 members in time.

Andy Megrath has received little response on the idea of bringing the Moving Wall (a traveling replica of The Wall in Washington, D.C., that memorializes Vietnam War dead) to Rutland. One person has expressed a willingness to assist in the considerable volunteer effort needed to host the Moving Wall. The chapter is on a waiting list for the replica and might be able to host it in May or June of 2007, but we have not yet committed to the effort.

Andy reported that he had just been sworn in as a member of the State Guard, a volunteer organization that serves as a backup and support to the Vermont National Guard. The State Guard can be called out by the governor. He said the State Guard has 120 members in the Rutland area and 800 members statewide.

Chapter 1 member Bob Rummel, in charge of assistance to homeless veterans for the Veterans Administration in White River Junction, said there is a strong link between the Family Center at Camp Johnson, which supports the families of deployed Vermont National Guard soldiers, and the VA.

Bob then provided a wide-ranging look at services and procedures of the VA in Vermont. He coordinates a statewide shelter program for homeless vets and uses contracts and arrangements with other facilities when needed to provide for them. Rummel started the Dodge House for homeless vets in Rutland. He works with from 50 to 100 different homeless veterans per year.

He is also the liaison person with the National Guard for veterans returning from deployment. Affiliated with the mental health department of VA services, he's involved with services for vets experiencing what is now being called "combat stress."

Bob said his group is trying to get away from the popular designation "PTSD," or post traumatic stress disorder, because that is viewed as a full-blown illness. PTSD is particularly associated with Vietnam veterans, whose postwar emotional difficulties led to the formal designation of the illness known as PTSD. "We now believe that through early intervention not as many people will develop PTSD," he said. As it happens, the national center for PTSD is at White River Junction, he said.

"We're instituting a program within the Guard — a new program — to train up everybody about what the symptoms are of combat stress," he said. "And if you experience the combat stress and you get some help it's very manageable, and we believe now that it will actually recede and disappear, whereas for all us guys [Vietnam vets] it would never happen because it was way too long [before help was given]."

One significant innovation in VA services in White River Junction, Rummel said, is its drop-in mental health clinic. "You can walk off the street as a veteran," he said. "You can get a complete mental workup evaluation. You'll see a psychiatrist. You'll be prescribed meds if you need them as a result of the diagnosis, and you'll be given a return appointment. And you can walk off the street and get that. Cold turkey."

The drop-in services are available on Wednesdays at the CBOC (community-based outreach clinic) in Burlington, and the VA is trying to offer them in Bennington.

He also reviewed the maze of eligibility rules for VA services, describing the changing standards as "like holding Jello in your hand." That is, they change "every time you turn around." Some rules, however, are fairly solid, he said. For example, those who served in the armed forces before Sept. 7, 1980, when the so-called all-volunteer army began, only need one day of active duty to be eligible for VA services, although excessive income levels can exclude you from those services. After that date, one would need two consecutive years on active duty.

"I can't stress enough how fluid this whole mess is, about these qualifiers," Bob said.

He also described the benefits section of the VA as "in crisis," noting that the waiting period for those applying for benefits at White River is eight months to a year and four months. Only the day before, however, a bill was submitted in the U.S. Senate to double the nationwide number of "raters" (the people who act on VA claim applications). Rummel said Vermont Sen. James Jeffords was responsible for adding the provision for new raters to the legislation.

Bob agreed to come to our next meeting and further share his knowledge of the VA and its services. It is possible that he'll be called to Camp Shelby in Mississippi sometime in June to help process returning soldiers and will have to postpone his attendance. Otherwise, members should look forward to another informative and interesting presentation.

Jack Crowther proposed that the chapter offer a \$500 scholarship to each high school in Rutland County to be awarded to a child of a veteran for further education. The consensus was that criteria for the award needed to be established and applications solicited during the next school, for award of the scholarships a year from now.

**The next meeting will be Wednesday, June 14, at 6 p.m.
at the chapter offices at the VFW, 15 Wales St., Rutland.**

Submitted by,

Jack Crowther, Secretary

VVA Chapter 1
15 Wales St.
Rutland, VT 05701-4026

Address Correction Requested



Vietnam Veterans Of America

Chapter One

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JUNE 2006



MINUTES OF CHAPTER MEETING

June 14, 2006

Seven members were present.

President Andy Megrath purchased a new flag for the Rutland County Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Main Street Park in Rutland to replace the worn-out flag.

Andy has been keeping tabs on the theft from a VA employee of a laptop with personal records information. He reported that veterans whose personal information could be at risk of use by unauthorized people now includes those who have sought help from the VA since 1970.

The secretary's report was unanimously approved as printed in the May newsletter.

Dick Doyle reported by e-mail that the chapter has 130 regular members. He also notes that 28 members have indicated a willingness to receive the newsletter via e-mail, which will save about \$11 per issue in postage.

Richard Reed, service officer for VVA in Vermont, will be in Rutland June 20 to assist veterans with Veterans Administration claims. This newsletter will arrive too late for that visit, but Richard has a full month of visits around the state. He can be reached by any of the following means: State of Vermont Veterans Affairs, 118 State St., Drawer 20, Montpelier, VT 05620, (888) 666-9844 (toll-free in Vermont), (802) 828-3379, (802) 224-6080 (cell phone), e-mail RReed@va.state.vt.us. The Web site is www.va.state.vt.us.

Don Amorosi of Glens Falls thanked the chapter for our \$100 donation to Keith Maupin, father of Sgt. Keith M. Maupin of Ohio, member of an Army Reserve unit in Illinois. The son was captured in Iraq about two years ago and his fate is unknown. His family is seeking to keep attention on the matter and trying to keep their son from being classified KIA-BNR (killed in action, body not recovered). Don is helping with that effort by soliciting funds.

Members devoted some time to a suggestion of Jack Crowther to create a "Welcome Home" scholarship for a graduating high school seniors from Rutland County. As proposed, the scholarship would provide \$500 to each high school. "Money will be awarded to the son or daughter of a veteran of the military, either regular service, National Guard or Reserves," according to the proposal. "The person who served or is serving can also be the legal guardian of the student instead of a parent."

Each school was to form a committee of three, select a student and forward that name to Chapter 1 for a final decision. "Selection will be made on the basis of character, citizenship and classroom achievement," the proposal says. "Those applying should state the intended use for the money. Typically, we would expect the money to be used for further education of some kind, but a student entering the military directly should be equally eligible if they state a reasonable use for the money, such as support of a family member."

A number of points were raised in discussion, including the fact that with eight or nine (if the Killington Mountain School were included) the program would cost \$4,000 to \$4,500, perhaps too much for the chapter to afford.

A suggestion from Fred Hellmuth was that the schools select a student to apply for the scholarship and write us a letter, perhaps an essay. The chapter would then award a larger scholarship — \$1,500, for example — to the selected student.

Walt Crossmon thought the potential cost was high and asked about the scope of Chapter 1 charitable efforts, in other words, whether future assistance offered was to be directed toward local purposes or more widespread ones.

Mike Divoll suggested money might be provided for attendance to a particular school. He expressed the need to have a project the chapter could "wrap our hands around."

Dave Mathis said he thought a scholarship was a good idea but he'd rather see a larger amount given to a single student. In that event, the scholarship might be awarded each year. Walt Crossman thought the support of a single student was more feasible economically.

The group decided to table the issue until the July meeting. The proposed schedule for putting the scholarship into motion involves notifying schools in the fall and having them provide their selections before our May meeting. Members are welcome to forward their thoughts on this to President Andy Megrath at vt hogman ATadelphia DOT net

(written this way to confuse spammers).

Heather Hinckley, family readiness volunteer for the 2nd Battalion, 172nd Armored of the Vermont National Guard, requested assistance for the wife of a soldier deployed in Iraq whose paycheck was "screwed up." To assist, the chapter provided \$500 from its fund for helping families of deployed service people. The money went to help pay the woman's rent.

Though most of the deployed Vermont soldiers are now home, some others are being sent to the Mideast. Fred Hellmuth suggested that the chapter continue its program of assistance for at least another month. Jack Crowther moved that the fund be replenished with another \$500. Seconded by Fred. Motion passed unanimously. Because of the need for prompt action, the president and one other officer can dispense up to \$500 in assistance when requested to do so by Hinckley or another trusted person.

Walt Crossmon asked about fund-raisers conducted by the chapter, and Andy Megrath reviewed past efforts. In recent years, however, the chapter has not carried out fund-raising, relying instead on proceeds from rip-ticket sales at Tomasi's, a bar in Fair Haven. Walt felt that soliciting raffle items would be well received and he said he was willing to do that. It was suggested that he come back with some specifics at the next meeting.

The Chapter One members listed below have sent in their e-mail addresses to share with other members. Anyone who would like to add their name to the list can simply e-mail Dick Doyle, who is maintaining the list. Dick's e-mail is in the list below. The names in **boldface** are new additions or have new e-mail addresses. Mass mailings to this chapter list should be limited to Chapter 1 business.

Personal email addresses concealed

The next meeting will be Wednesday, July 12, at 6 p.m.
at the chapter offices at the VFW, 15 Wales St., Rutland.

We plan to skip the meeting in August.

Submitted by,

Jack Crowther, Secretary

VVA Chapter 1
15 Wales St.
Rutland, VT 05701-4026

Address Correction Requested



Vietnam Veterans Of America

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JULY 2006



Special Notice and Invitation

Chapter 1 is pleased to announce that it will host a Dutch-treat dinner Aug. 16 at South Station restaurant in Rutland to hear a talk by retired Army Col. Clint Granger, who served in both the Korean and Vietnam wars and was in Vietnam shortly before its fall to the Communists in April of 1975. Currently a resident of Rutland, Col. Granger will cover highlights of his career. Accounts of members who have met him say he is a good storyteller and has much of interest to share.

The evening will begin with a social hour from 6 to 7, followed by dinner at 7 p.m. Those attending will order from the regular menu. Col. Granger's talk will follow the meal. Those who wish to come for the talk only should RSVP along with those attending for the dinner, so we'll know how big a space to book at South Station. Though the event is primarily for members, you may bring a guest.

Please RSVP to President Andy Megrath by Aug. 11 by e-mailing him at vthogman@adelphia.net, calling him at 775-1745 or writing him at the address on this newsletter. Remember, he needs to receive your reservation by Aug. 11. Let him know if you're bringing a guest.

Just a reminder, there is no regular August meeting. The next regular meeting will be Sept. 13 at 6 p.m. at the chapter offices at the VFW at 15 Wales St.

MINUTES OF CHAPTER MEETING July 12, 2006

Seven members were present.

The minutes of the June meeting were unanimously approved as printed in the June newsletter.

Treasurer Dave Mathis reported a total of \$16,277.93 in the chapter's accounts. The report was unanimously approved.

The newsletter is now available by e-mail and a number of members are receiving it by this method, saving the chapter on postage. Your computer needs to be able to read the PDF format, which requires Acrobat Reader, a free program. Simply notify Dick Doyle, whose e-mail appears in the list at the bottom of the newsletter. If you do NOT wish to share your e-mail with other members but simply want to receive the newsletter by e-mail, make that clear to Dick.

Andy Megrath has been keeping tabs on the theft of the computer of a VA employee with personal information on millions of those on the VA rolls. He said the computer was recovered with the data disk and that a preliminary report of the FBI indicated the data was intact and had not been accessed since it was stolen. A more thorough forensic examination of the computer was under way, and a report was to be forthcoming. The date of the memo that Andy received was June 30.

Bob Rummel, said the VA's response included all employees taking a short security exam and signing a statement pledging not to reveal anyone's personal information.

The chapter received a request for a donation for support of a Family Fun Day Aug. 12 at Camp Johnson for members of the Vermont National Guard and family members. The event is sponsored by the Vermont National Guard Charitable Foundation Inc. Bob Rummell said the event was a function of the Family Center for the guard at Camp Johnson, which is prevented from using guard money or federal funds. He described the Fun Day as "really quite a good event because ... they bring in the new people who have come back [from deployment] and they add in the people who are being deployed." A lot of "family support interconnectedness" takes place, he said.

Dick Doyle moved to donate \$100 to the event. Seconded by Jack Crowther. Motion passed unanimously.

Andy Megrath, chapter president, displayed minutes of the last meeting of the Veterans Council of Rutland County, of which the chapter is theoretically a member. Unfortunately, the chapter has no representation, and is normally not sent

minutes of the meetings or notified of meetings. Even the minutes of the May meeting do not tell when the next meeting is or where it will be held. The group is made up of various veterans groups in the county.

The national VVA sent a communication asking for assistance keeping the public informed about VVA and Vietnam veterans. No action was taken.

Andy Megrath reported on a referral from Bob Rummel of a request for assistance for a homeless veteran living at the Rutland City Mission and needing money to register his truck to get a job. After brief discussion, Jack Crowther moved to pay for the registration up to \$100 (whatever the exact amount is for the vehicle). Seconded by Mike Divoll. Motion passed unanimously.

We continued discussion about Jack Crowther's proposal for a Welcome Home Scholarship, which was discussed at the last meeting. Sam Bunge from Alaska wrote in with a couple of suggestions, including establishing selection criteria in advance and presenting the assistance after completion of the first semester of college. Proof of a C average and enrollment in the second term could be required.

Jack's revisions following the last meeting included making the scholarship a \$1,500 to \$2,000 award to a single student, rather than \$500 to one student from each school in the county. Each school would form a committee to sift through applications and select a winner to be forwarded to Chapter One, stating the reason for the selection. Students would submit an essay of about 300 words on the subject, "What My Parent's (or Guardian's) Military Service Means to Me." Selection was to be made on the basis of "character, citizenship and classroom achievement."

We discussed whether the selected students should appear before the chapter. This was tossed around, including whether that would prove cumbersome to the chapter or awkward for the students. Perhaps just the top picks would be invited. The scholarship could also be provided for training courses as well as colleges. Bob Rummel and Andy Megrath suggested persons entering the military could get the award for post-military education or training.

Larry Young suggested that the veteran could also be a stepparent of the student. In line with Sam Bunge's suggestion, we considered whether we might spread the award over a couple of years to insure the money goes for the educational purpose.

It was agreed that the parent, step-parent or guardian serving in the military would have to have an honorable discharge (unless currently serving).

Dick Doyle reported that the chapter has 132 regular members. Recent renewals included Michael Klopchin, David Vadnais and John Walker. Robert Posch has signed up for a life membership. About half of the chapter's members are life members. For those interested, the cost of life membership is \$250 for ages 49 and under, \$225 for ages 50 to 55, \$200 for ages 56 to 60, \$175 for ages 61 to 65, and \$150 for ages 66 and over. Membership can be paid for over time, with \$50 down and \$25 per month.

Jack Crowther moved to provide a \$50 gift certificate to Don Ramey, the sculptor who repaired the vandalism to the chapter's marble sculpture at the Rutland County Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Rutland. Seconded by Dick Doyle. Motion passed unanimously.

Bob Rummel has offered to speak on VA benefits, as he did at the May meeting, to a future meeting of the chapter if there is sufficient interest. He noted that all those "in country" Vietnam veterans who served from 1965 until 1975 were qualified for VA services, regardless of income.

**The next meeting will be Wednesday, Sept. 13, at 6 p.m.
at the chapter offices at the VFW, 15 Wales St., Rutland.**

We plan to skip the meeting in August.

Submitted by,
Jack Crowther, Secretary

VVA Chapter 1
15 Wales St.
Rutland, VT 05701-4026

Address Correction Requested



Vietnam Veterans Of America

Chapter One

www.vvachapter1.com

SEPTEMBER 2006



MINUTES OF CHAPTER MEETING

Sept. 13, 2006

Seven members were present.

The minutes of the July meeting were unanimously approved as printed in the July newsletter.

Treasurer Dave Mathis reported a total of \$15,395.60 in the chapter's accounts. The report was unanimously approved.

President Andy Megrath has replaced the attachment hardware on the flag at the Rutland County Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Main Street Park in Rutland. One of the snaps had failed. Stainless steel hardware has arrived and will replace the temporary brass fittings.

After brief discussion, we decided by consensus not to host the Moving Wall, a traveling replica of The Wall in Washington, D.C., that memorializes Vietnam War dead. The Moving Wall would have been available in June of 2007, but solicitation of interest from members showed a response from just one person. Dick Doyle estimated that 20 to 40 volunteers would be required to pull off a visit by the memorial. In addition, there is an up-front cost of \$4,000.

There was a limited turnout to the dinner with Col. Clint Granger on Aug. 16 at South Station. Andy Megrath apologized for the delay in sending out the electronic version of the newsletter, which contained the invitation to the event. The printed newsletter and invitation went out on time. It was decided to invite Col. Granger to the Oct. 11 meeting so more of us can hear of his Army career, which included service in the Korean and Vietnam wars. He was in Vietnam shortly before its fall in April of 1975.

Membership currently stands at 133, including 67 life members and four associate members. New life members include Russell Moulton Sr. of Rutland Town and David Posner of Delray Beach, Fla. Recent renewals include Tom Whittaker of Brandon, Ken Curtis of Pittsford and Douglas MacPhee of Bellows Falls.

Chapter 1 will be updating the Honor Roll and the Rutland County Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Rutland on Veterans Day, Nov. 11. There are eight new names and a couple of corrections to the Honor Roll, which lists those who served in the Vietnam War and entered the service from Rutland County.

We will notify local media of the opportunity to be listed if the necessary paperwork is submitted by Oct. 11. A DD 214 service record showing service in Vietnam and entry into the military from Rutland County is required.

Dick Doyle reported that a book in which he is mentioned is now in print and available at Amazon.com. The book is "Troubled Hero: A Medal of Honor, Vietnam, and the War at Home," by Randy Mills. It is the story of a man in Dick's platoon in the 1st Battalion, 506th Infantry, 101st Airborne Division. A 20-year-old medic, Pfc. Kenneth Kays was awarded the Medal of Honor following a battle on May 7, 1970, but committed suicide in the 1990s. The chapter will order a copy and make it available in its library.

Jack Crowther said his interest in a Chapter 1 scholarship for a graduating high school senior was waning as he thought about the administrative requirements that had grown as the proposal developed over the last few meetings. While the chapter has money for such an award, it lacks the manpower to administer it, he felt. Alternative ideas suggested included advertising in the media and on our Web site for applications which could be received and judged by the chapter. No specific action was taken, and it appears that the idea will be dropped.

Dick Doyle moved that Chapter 1 continue to maintain a \$500 emergency fund to assist families of deployed Vermont soldiers. Seconded by Dave Mathis. Motion passed unanimously. Requests for assistance

are relayed through Heather Hinckley, family readiness coordinator for the 2nd Battalion, 172nd Armored of the Vermont National Guard.

The Chapter One members listed below have sent in their e-mail addresses to share with other members. Anyone who would like to add their name to the list can simply e-mail Dick Doyle, who is maintaining the list. Dick's e-mail is in the list below. The names in **boldface** are new additions or have new e-mail addresses. Mass mailings to this chapter list should be limited to Chapter 1 business.

Also let Dick know if you are willing to receive the newsletter by e-mail, which saves us postage. You need Adobe Acrobat, a free program, on your computer to do this. Note that you can receive the newsletter by e-mail without having your address on the list below. Just let Dick know.

Personal email addresses concealed

Submitted by Jack Crowther, Secretary

**The next meeting will be Wednesday, Oct. 11, at 6 p.m.
at the chapter offices at the VFW, 15 Wales St., Rutland.**

VVA Chapter 1
15 Wales St.
Rutland, VT 05701-4026
Address Correction Requested



Vietnam Veterans Of America

Chapter One

www.vvachapter1.com

OCTOBER 2006



MINUTES OF CHAPTER MEETING

Oct. 11, 2006

Six members and two guests were present.

The minutes of the September meeting were unanimously approved as printed in the September newsletter.

Treasurer Dave Mathis reported a total of \$14,827.94 in the chapter's accounts. The report was unanimously approved.

We agreed to continue to accept names for the Rutland County Vietnam Veterans Memorial until Oct. 28. So far, we have eight new names and a couple of corrections. To have a name entered, you must have a DD 214 service record showing service in the war (normally through award of the Vietnam Service Medal) and entry into the military from a town in Rutland County.

We agreed to install the updated Honor Roll at 10 a.m. on Veterans Day, which is Saturday, Nov. 11, at the memorial in Main Street Park. On that day, the VFW will be serving a complete breakfast, from 7 to 8:30 or 9 a.m., free to veterans and \$5 to others. Just show something to verify you're a veteran. Also on Veterans Day, the American Legion on Washington Street will have a service at 11 a.m.

President Andy Megrath noted that he and Ron "Skitch" Henderson will be cooking a breakfast at the VFW on Oct. 29, again a full breakfast for \$5 and open to the public about 8 a.m.

Heather Hinckley, a family readiness coordinator for the Vermont National Guard, requested assistance for the family of a deployed soldier. In this case, the family was more than \$600 in arrears on its electric bill and facing a shutoff.

Jack Crowther moved we appropriate \$500 to put toward the electric bill. This will be sufficient to prevent a shutoff of service. Seconded by Bill Whitney. Motion passed unanimously. Andy will also inform Heather of other avenues of help, including the assistance program run by Central Vermont Public Service, the electric utility.

Andy said he would try to attend the next meeting of the Veterans Council, which was to be Oct. 16 at 7 p.m.

The chapter declined to further assist a veteran whom we assisted with lodging this past summer.

Andy Megrath read a critical letter from David Cain, a life member and retired Navy veteran. Cain noted receiving his newsletter only on Oct. 10, a day before the October meeting, thus leaving little time to arrange to attend the meeting. He also wished all meetings were not held in Rutland, a considerable distance from his home.

Cain expressed annoyance that most donations of Chapter 1 "go to charities in the Rutland area," feeling "we are a statewide chapter with statewide veterans needs and entitlements."

Discussion followed on David Cain's points. It was noted that, with eight VVA chapters in Vermont, Chapter 1 does focus on its core area of Rutland County. Further, the chapter does support non-local causes, most recently assisting the family of Sgt. Keith Maupin of Ohio, who is missing in Iraq. The chapter has also supported the regional Friends of Veterans group.

Jack Crowther moved to appropriate \$250 as the second half of a year's commitment in support of the Boys & Girls Club of Rutland County, the chapter having donated the first half in March. Seconded by Bill Whitney. Motion passed unanimously. Following up on some discussion, Andy Megrath will obtain a financial statement from the club when he delivers the check.

The chapter has received the book "Troubled Hero: A Medal of Honor, Vietnam, and the War at Home," by Randy Mills, which contains a number of references to Dick Doyle, who served in the same unit. Also displayed was "The Two-Dollar Bill: One Man's Year in Vietnam," which has a picture on the front cover including our treasurer, Dave Mathis. Andy will try to locate the book and order it as well. The chapter has a number

of books, videos and periodicals which are available for loan.

Following adjournment of the meeting, those present were treated to a retrospective talk by retired Army Col. Clint Granger, who had reflected on his military career at a small dinner hosted by the chapter Aug. 16 at South Station. Retelling some of those stories, Col. Granger began by recommending a book called "Unheralded Victory: The Defeat of the Vietcong and the North Vietnamese Army, 1961-73," by Mark Woodruff, which documents American battle superiority during the period cited.

Seeking to avoid an assignment as a general's speechwriter, Granger volunteered for duty in Vietnam. He was there all of 1966 and 1967 and then came back to Vietnam near the end of the war in 1975.

Speaking of his initial tour, including a stint as commander of the 2nd Battalion, 35th Infantry, Granger, then a lieutenant colonel, emphasized the success of the U.S. forces, as described in "Unheralded Victory."

"Yes, we won, consistently, everything, all the time," he said. "On the other hand, I still, I can remember too many body bags. Six months' command of battalion, 400 killed and wounded."

After discussion of combat and other duties in that earlier period, Col. Granger skipped forward to 1975, when he was the senior army officer in the White House, the director of the planning staff of the National Security Council and a deputy to Secretary of State Henry Kissinger. Nixon had resigned and President Ford was in office. As the White House representative, he accompanied Army Chief of Staff Gen. Frederick Weyand to Vietnam in April 1975, about three weeks before the fall of Saigon to the Communists.

According to Col. Granger, the four Vietnamese military corps commanders were running the country at that point and were seeking massive help from President Ford, including a return of U.S. troops. That kind of help would not materialize. Nevertheless, Ford sent a delegation, headed by Gen. Weyand and including Col. Granger, to see what could be done. The group arrived about three weeks before the fall of Saigon, at which point the North Vietnamese had about a quarter of a million troops in South Vietnam and were poised to take over the country.

"You talk about a really horrifying experience," he began, going on to describe the plight of the civilian population and the collapse of the South Vietnamese resistance. About the South Vietnamese army, he said, "We taught the South Vietnamese, and they did pretty well, really . . . But we taught 'em to fight our way, and our way is as expensive as hell, in money and ammunition and everything that counts. And when the thing finally fell apart, only about 40 percent of their airplanes would fly, the tanks were under 50 percent . . . lack of spare parts. Artillery was limited to three rounds per tube per day. . . . And of course they were short of everything else."

"The Congress didn't vote the money, so there wasn't anything to send them," he said in explaining the U.S. politics that lay behind the situation.

A fall-back plan for the Vietnamese corps commanders to withdraw to the South Vietnamese coastal plain, an industrial center and source of much of the country's rice, fell apart when the II Corps commander, who had a division at Pleiku, ordered the withdrawing troops not to bring families. That was an unrealistic idea, according to Granger. The South Vietnamese troops disobeyed the order, commandeered military vehicles and fled with families toward the coast. Disintegration of the military units began there and spread. "The whole damn South Vietnamese Army folded," he said.

A question period followed.

**The next meeting will be Wednesday, Nov. 8, at 6 p.m.
at the chapter offices at the VFW, 15 Wales St., Rutland.**

VVA Chapter 1
15 Wales St.
Rutland, VT 05701-4026

Address Correction Requested



Vietnam Veterans Of America

Chapter One

www.vvachapter1.com

NOVEMBER 2006



MINUTES OF CHAPTER MEETING

Nov. 8, 2006

Four members were present.

The minutes of the October meeting were unanimously approved as printed in the newsletter.

President Andy Megrath presented the treasurer's report, showing a total of \$15,592.41 in the chapter's accounts. The report was unanimously approved.

Andy passed around a newsletter from our member Dave Woodcraft of London, in which he reports his recovery from "a couple of strokes" some months ago. Dave and his wife, Elaine, visited the chapter in October 1999, and we're glad to report his progress.

Responding to a few questions from Chapter One Secretary Jack Crowther, Dave wrote back as follows:

"I joined the Royal Naval Reserve in 1961 and transferred to the Royal Australian Navy in 1964. I spent two years on the aircraft carrier HMAS Sydney and saw service on her during the Indonesian Confrontation in 1964 and did two trips to Vietnam in 1965. My last fulltime posting was Command Technical Officer for Queensland. I transferred to the RAN reserve in 1975 and was posted to the retired list in 1999 as Lieutenant Commander RAN (rtd).

"In 1975 I joined Lloyd's Register of Shipping and served in London, Abu Dhabi, Nigeria, Tilbury and spent my last 15 working years as a Senior Ship and Engineer Surveyor in Headquarters running a technical database department. I retired in 1999 and until last year was doing charity work for the Royal Naval Association and the Royal British Legion.

"I am currently President of an Australian charity called London Legacy that looks after the widows and dependents of Australian servicemen living in the UK, France and Belgium and was made a Freeman of the City of London last year. I am also the UK representative for the HMAS Sydney Association. This Remembrance Sunday I am privileged to take the salute at the Rayleigh Essex parade of the Royal British Legion.

"I was born in the UK and never took Australian citizenship as there was no advantage in those days, I am unlikely to do so now as my 5 children and 13 grandchildren live fairly close to me in the UK or Spain.

"That's a very potted history as I don't want to bore you all.

"Best regards,

"Dave W"

Andy has received the independent auditor's report for the Boys and Girls Club of Rutland County, and it is available for examination. Chapter One provided the club with donations totaling \$500 this year.

It was agreed by consensus that we would not link our website to a site described as an asbestos and mesothelioma resource website, the feeling being that we should not open the door with links to sites not directly connected to the chapter's purposes.

Jack Crowther displayed printouts of the updated Rutland County Vietnam Veterans Memorial Honor Roll, reproduced in an 11- by 17-inch format on heavy paper. The full-size Honor Roll with 10 new names was installed at the memorial on Nov. 11, Veterans Day.

Dick Doyle reported that the secretary of veterans affairs, who is R. James Nicholson, has recommended that veterans wear their medals on Veterans Day, as is the custom in New Zealand and Australia. An article on this appears at the VA website, www.va.gov, including pictures showing how the medals are to be displayed.

Chapter One Vice President Larry Young reported that his niece, Michelle Rogers, is now in charge of day-to-day operation of the Dodge House, Rutland's place for homeless vets.

The Chapter One members listed below have sent in their e-mail addresses to share with other members. Anyone who would like to add their name to the list can simply e-mail Dick Doyle, who is maintaining the list. Dick's e-mail is in the list below. Mass mailings to this chapter list should be limited to Chapter One business.

Also let Dick know if you are willing to receive the newsletter by e-mail, which saves us postage. You need Adobe Acrobat, a free program, on your computer to do this. Note that you can receive the newsletter by e-mail without having your address on the list below. Just let Dick know.

Personal email addresses concealed

Submitted by Jack Crowther, Secretary

**The next meeting will be Wednesday, Dec. 13, at 6 p.m.
at the chapter offices at the VFW, 15 Wales St., Rutland.**

Postscript to the minutes:

I presided at a small but nice ceremony on Veterans Day, Nov. 11, and the Rutland County Vietnam War Memorial, where we updated the Honor Roll of those who served in the war.

The following names were added: Richard Baker, William Beck, Robert Duncan, Roland Faucher, Theodore Poczobut, and D. Code Taylor, all of whom entered the service from Rutland; Russell Moulton, who entered from Brandon; Robert Pietryka, West Rutland; David Trombley, Pittsford; and David Williams, Poultney.

The chapter also corrected several errors in the existing list, which has now grown to 280 from an initial list of about 125. The memorial also lists the names of 18 men who were killed in action during the war. Already there have been a few inquiries from those interested in having their names added to the list. This was the sixth version of the Honor Roll installed at the site.

Louis Wierzbicki of the VFW Color Guard generously assisted with the ceremony, attended by about 15 people.

Jack Crowther

VVA Chapter 1
15 Wales St.
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Vietnam Veterans Of America

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DECEMBER 2006



MINUTES OF CHAPTER MEETING

Dec. 13, 2006

Four members were present.

The minutes of the November meeting were unanimously approved as printed in the newsletter.

Dave Mathis presented the treasurer's report, showing a total of \$14,763.49 in the chapter's two accounts. The report was unanimously approved.

The chapter has already received a couple inquiries about additions to the Rutland County Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Rutland. On Veterans Day, Nov. 11, the chapter installed a new version of the Honor Roll of those who served in the Vietnam War, adding 10 names.

President Andy Megrath has organized the chapter's file of DD 214 service records into notebooks, with each record protected by plastic sleeves. We receive the records when people apply for membership or for inclusion on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

The Dodge Development Center for homeless veterans invited chapter members to a Homeless Candlelight Vigil Dec. 21 at the center, just east of the intersection of Grove and Crescent streets in Rutland. The time is 5 p.m.

Jack Crowther displayed a Rutland Herald article about Jeremy Orr of Waitsfield, a Vermont National Guard soldier who has started a fund for medical assistance to Iraqi children. Jack suggested it might be a good cause for the chapter to support.

Jack also reported on a phone conversation with Tom Reardon, now of Middlebury, Indiana, a longtime Chapter One member and former head of our color guard. Tom has had some medical problems resulting from contact with a poisonous bush in Australia and from West Nile virus, as well as family challenges, but was talkative and hoping to visit Vermont in the foreseeable future.

No one was sure where they came from, but an envelope of 2-inch X 5 1/2-inch and 3/4-inch by 2 3/4-inch peel-off vinyl stickers representing the Vietnam Service Medal ribbon showed up. They are available to members as long as they last. Please send a self-addressed stamped envelope to our address at 15 Wales St., Rutland, VT 05701-4026 if you want one of each mailed to you.

The Chapter One members listed below have sent in their e-mail addresses to share with other members. Anyone who would like to add their name to the list can simply e-mail Dick Doyle, who is maintaining the list. Dick's e-mail is in the list below. Mass mailings to this chapter list should be limited to Chapter One business. **Names in boldface are new additions or changes.**

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Personal email addresses concealed

Submitted by Jack Crowther, Secretary

**The next meeting will be Wednesday, Jan. 10, at 6 p.m.
at the chapter offices at the VFW, 15 Wales St., Rutland.**

VVA Chapter 1
15 Wales St.
Rutland, VT 05701-4026

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